



Forest Service

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News Release

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Forest Service Hires Garten as New Clinch District Ranger



(May 26, 2015) Roanoke, Va - The USDA Forest Service is pleased to announce the hiring of Barry Garten as the new Clinch District Ranger, headquartered in Norton, Virginia. Garten replaces recently retired District Ranger Jorge Hersel and reports for duty on June 1. Garten will oversee approximately 100,000 acres of National Forest System lands in Virginia, and nearly a thousand acres in Kentucky. The district consists of six counties, containing over 100 miles of trails, four campgrounds, 200 miles of roads, and is known for enhancing wildlife habitat through prescribed fire and vegetation management. Garten returns to the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests after four years working for the Southern Regional Office as the Assistant Regional Fuels Specialist.

“Barry’s ties to southwest Virginia run deep,” says Forest Supervisor Tom Speaks. “His experience managing natural resources in the southern Appalachians make him an ideal district ranger for southwest Virginia.”

Garten is no stranger to southwest Virginia. From 2003 to 2010, Garten worked on the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests in Roanoke, Virginia as the Assistant Fire Management Officer where he managed the prescribed burn program for 1.8 million acres of public land. “I’m thrilled to return to southwest Virginia, and I’m excited to work closely with the local communities,” says Garten.

Garten began his Forest Service career in 1980 as member of the Young Adult Conservation Corps working in California. Garten attended the University of North Carolina at Wilmington where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in 1984. Garten has served on four Ranger Districts on three National Forests across the country. In 2012 Garten served as acting Ranger of the Croatan District in North Carolina for six months, and for three months as acting Ranger of the Lee District on the George Washington National Forest.

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A well-known name throughout the firefighting community, Garten has participated on a national response Incident Management Team since 1995, where he is currently a Section Chief in charge of Fire Operations for the Southern Area's Blue Team. Garten has worked on a number of high profile incidents including the Big Turnaround Fire in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge in Georgia, The Rim Fire in the Stanislaus National Forest and Yosemite National Park in California, and Hurricane Ike in Houston, Texas.

Garten and his wife Barb enjoy exploring Virginia on their Harley Davidson Motorcycles.

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